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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper was to measure small groups at various stages of their development and observe the effects of changes in group process on emergence of role types and the impact these roles have on group membership as a whole. Most small group measuring instruments have been built around a task-leader or socio-emotional leader dichotomy. Lack of consistent direct relationship between the influence of individual members of the group and their position in the group suggests that an understanding of group leadership and power cannot be gained solely from a functional approach in a social influence perspective. The propositions and hypotheses of this paper are concerned with the general power a leader in a group holds over the membership throughout the group's life span. Proana 5 computer simulation was used to demonstrate the theoretical considerations of this paper in terms of small group interaction, providing a possible description of the interaction of on-going groups. (Author/LG)

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TASK AND SOCIO-EMOTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN ONGOING GROUPS: A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

James G. Quiggins and William B. Lashbrook

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Abstract

There is a need for empirical research in all communication contexts which observes human communication as a process. This approach has been especially neglected in the area of small group investigation. The examination of static groups which operate for a limited time period provides little opportunity for the researcher to observe structural differentiation of member roles or the impact a member's role may have on his influence over the group. This study will attempt to measure small groups at various stages of their development and observe the effects of process change on role types that emerge in groups and the impact these roles have on the group membership as a whole.

Most of our small group measuring instruments have been built around or at least accounted for a task-socioemotional leader dichotomy, but the lack of consistent support between the influence of individual members on the group and their position in the group suggests that an understanding of group leadership and power cannot be gained solely from a functional approach or a social influence perspective.

The propositions and hypotheses in this paper are concerned with the general power or influence a task-leader or socio-emotional leader in a group holds over the membership throughout the group's life span.

Proana5 computer simulation will be used to demonstrate the theoretical considerations of this paper in terms of small group interaction.

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Introduction

Despite the fact that renowned researcher-publishers have indicted small group research for its lack of integrated findings and that convention programs desperately call for heuristic papers and more theoretic development, there is still a considerable gap between existing small group investigation and research which examines small group communication in a process framework.

Most notable and long-standing among the lack of systematic development of theory in small group research is in the area of small group leadership. Although leadership has been the central focus of research in the small group context, the sum total of the research has yeilded very little consistent support upon which to build theory. It may not be our responsibility to comprise an all inclusive theory of small group leadership but we should be committed to contribute to the theoretic development in this area by examining the relationship of leadership with bona fide communication variables, namely the classes of message linkages that determine communicative processes and outcomes (Kibler and Barker, 1969). We may further integrate research within our discipline to promote theoretic development by applying communication constructs which have demonstrated previous reliability in one setting to a variety of interpersonal contexts.

The thrust of this paper is to examine the measurement of small group leadership in light of group member interaction behavior as well as from the viewpoint of the impact a member's role may have on his influence over the group. Since the examination of static groups which operate for a limited time period neglects a process orientation to communication, this paper suggests the measurement of ongoing groups at various stages of their development as a method to observe the effects of process change on leader-role types that emerge in groups.

Theoretical Support

The earliest approach to leadership was concerned with identifying the characteristics of leaders. Extensive research has attempted to discover the relationship between various personality, biographical, or behavioral characteristics which leaders possess (Bass, 1949; Carter, 1952; Strodtbeck, 1954; Borgatta, Cottrell, and Mann, 1958).

Bird (1940) and Stogdill (1948) have synthesized the research dealing with the trait approach to leadership and their work generally contains contradictory findings. McGrath and Altman (1966) have provided a list of leadership characteristics in a recent synthesis of small group research. Their findings are that group leaders excel in some personality characteristics such as extroversion, assertiveness, and social maturity. They also found that leaders were more educated, intelligent, of higher group status, and usually had training in leader techniques. Since this approach to leadership has not provided consistent results, it has been relatively abandoned in recent years and perhaps justifiably so.

The situational approach as researched by Fiedler (1968) became popular as a possible alternative to the trait approach and posits (1) that group effectiveness is contingent on the appropriateness of the leader's style for the situation, (2) that the appropriateness of the leader's style depends on the degree to which the group situation allows the leader to exert influence, and (3) that, because leadership style is difficult to change it is better to change the work situation. Several other researchers (Gouldner, 1950; Borg, 1957; Barnlund, 1962; and Newcomb, 1965) have also suggested that leadership is relative to the group situation. The situational approach has demonstrated that leadership cannot be investigated apart from group members and group tasks but does not go much beyond that conclusion. A situational approach leads logically to the examination of leadership as the functions performed by a group member in a particular situation.

The functional approach to leadership has attracted a great deal of research which has substantiated the idea that leadership is the performance of those acts by group members which help the group achieve its preferred outcomes (Bales, 1950, 1953, 1958; Bales and Strodtbeck, 1951; Cattell, 1951, 1963; Barnlund, 1951, 1955; Hamblin, 1958; Stogdill, 1959; Barnlund and Haiman, 1960; Bass, 1960; Cartwright and Zander, 1960, 1968; Likert, 1961; Heslin and Dunphy, 1964; Mortensen, 1964; Gulley, 1968; and Bormann, 1969). According to this view, all functions that help the group achieve its goal are leadership functions.

Some research suggests that the group members which display certain functions in the group may emerge as leaders (Bales, 1958; Likert, 1961; and Heslin and Dunphy, 1964). The leaders which emerge are also specialists in the function they perform so that both a task and a socio-emotional leader may emerge in the same group. Observers using the Bale's interaction process analysis instrument (IPA) found that the task leader participated in more problem-solving behavior while the socio-emotional leader was best liked and contributed more to the interpersonal problems in the group. Furthermore, the members of the group will turn to the appropriate specialist to handle task and interpersonal obstacles within the group.

Bales IPA has dominated the field as a measuring instrument in small group research and has lead the way for the development of other somewhat more sophisticated small group instruments. Leathers (1969) and McCroskey and Wright (1971) have developed instruments which provide data amenable to parametric statistical analysis. Even though the original IPA has been revised, the task-socio-emotional dichotomy is still prominent in small group research. This role differentiation has failed to appear in some research perhaps because of the relatively short life span of the group. It still has relatively solid support in most studies which take this approach.

Research by Dunphy (1966) suggests that the role differentiation appears consistently over several sessions of the same group and by examining legitimate long-term groups we may gain some insight into the question of whether or not there are patterns of role differentiation which are affected by the process change of the group. Dunphy (1966) also noted the task-socioemotional dichotomy in terms of the nature of the group itself. He found that on-going groups tend to shift from an impersonal concern with authority structure and power maneuvers to a greater emotional involvement among the group members. This shift would also imply that the socio-emotional leader may become more influential as the nature of the group interaction becomes more personal and develops an identity of its own.

Although the functional approach includes the concept of shared leadership, the operation of social power within the group should be clearly recognized. When a group member contributes by performing a group function, his contribution also requires influencing the behavior of other people in some way consistent with his role in the group. A person must have power to exert influence if he is to make a significant contribution to group functions and fulfill a leadership role. It also seems safe to assume that the more influence a group member perceives he holds, the more functions he will contribute which in turn gains him a position of status in the group. Mulder and Sterding (1958) found that the person who is most able to meet the needs of a group is more likely to be granted leadership. The influence in the small group setting is also a function of the referencing behavior of the power person or referencing by another functional contributing member.

If a particular member maintains his functional position over time he may then be in a position to determine the nature of his leadership as finite or infinite and establish idiosyncratic credit in the group. Likert (1961) stated that a leader may relinquish power but still maintain or even strengthen his influence over the group. The nature of the socio-emotional functions

performed by the better-liked socio-emotional leader are such that although he does not hold as much legitimate power as the task-leader, he may have a greater influence over the group as a whole and especially in the area of non-task related concepts. We should keep in mind that the social influence of a group member may be increased or diminished depending upon the effects of ongoing interactions on persons as perceivers. Hollander (1964) notes that:

> The essential point is that people retain a history of what has transpired in the past, even though that process need not be confining as a determiner of behavior since new experience is continuously having its effects.

Since the influence of a functional leader is a product of the other group members perceptions of the leader as well as his behavior, the constructs of credibility and attraction become more significant in the group setting. Both credibility and attraction are receiver perceptions of a source and would seem to be crucial in determining which functions will determine the leader and whether or not the leader maintains his position. Mortensen (1972) points out that it is futile to generalize about social influence as if it consisted of a single undifferentiated process. Social influence as mentioned earlier centers not only on the content of communication,as it does primarily in the one-to-many setting, but it also centers on personal relationships which are the bases for legitimate small group development. It seems safe to assume that as relationships develop over time, content fades in relative importance in regards to the way one individual influences another. The interrelatedness of credibility and attraction with interpersonal relationships would then seem to become even more crucial over time.

McGrath and Altman (1966) support the relationship between interpersonal attraction and social influence in the small group.

> . . . perceptions of other's task-related abilities and other's social and task status bear a positive relationship to liking others. This finding suggests that one of the bases of interpersonal attraction may be identification with those in favored positions or with those who possess desirable task-and-situation-related characteristics (McGrath and Altman, 1966, p. 60).

Collins and Guetzkow (1964) also make the assertion that the degree of interpersonal attraction group members hold of a single member is positively correlated with the power a single member holds over the group. Considerable research has shown that highly attractive persons do exert influence on others in a small group (Lippitt et. al., 1952; Hurwitz et. al, 1953; Lana et. al, 1960).

Collins and Guetzkow (1964) further add that the reason those we find attractive have power may be due to the idea that they control the reward stimuli. It seems probable that some group members gain control of the reward stimuli because of the function they perform in the group.

Some research suggests that attraction is greater for the socio-emotional group leader than for the task-leader (Bales, 1953, 1958). It may be that the presence of a highly competent task leader reflects unfavorably upon others and hence becomes a threat to their evaluations of their own abilities (Heider, 1958). If this were true, it may help explain how the socio-emotional as a reducer of threat becomes attractive to the group and attains influence over the membership.

Although it has been consistently observed that highly competent persons are seldom the most popular or best liked, their credibility still has a vital relationship with their degree of influence in the group. Andersen and Clevenger's (1963) synthesis of credibility research overwhelmingly supports the idea that credibility has a significant effect on immediate attitude change.

The measurement of source credibility has advanced considerably with the use of factor analysis and its application to the small group context is a logical application (Berlo et. al, 1969; McCroskey, 1966; McCroskey, et. al, 1971). Although there is a lack of research employing the credibility construct in a variety of settings, the support it has received in the one-to-many persuasive setting implies its importance in a social influence approach to group leadership.

Kelman (1961) pointed out the significance of the attraction and credibility constructs in the process of opinion change in terms of the source of the influencing agent's power. He also notes an important distinction between credibility and attraction that may be used to gain some insight into the differentiation of influence exerted by the task and socio-emotional leader. An attractive agent is perceived as attractive in the sense that an extended relationship with him is desirable and provides satisfaction for the receiver. This view implies that attraction may persist even outside of the group itself. The credibility construct, however, should be considered as qualities or behaviors of the agent which the receiver perceives as truthful, valid, or competent and is more situational in that it may be confined to the group setting. This reasoning may account for the research which fails to support a long-range impact due to credibility. It may even be safe to further assume that attraction is a better determinant of long-range effect on a receiver's attitudes than is credibility. If this is the case, it is quite easy to see how the better-liked socio-emotional leader will be able to exert more influence as time goes on in a small group or interpersonal relationship.

Mortensen (1972) recognizes that social influence may be either a short-term or persistent phenomena. If we examine the long-range effects of influence in a group, as well as the credibility and attraction of the influencing agent or leader we may find outcomes which vary from our observations of influence in static groups.

Finally we must consider how receiver perceptions are developed and the manner in which a leader makes his leadership functions or power known to the group. Most processes influenced in other contexts have been thoroughly examined by looking at the effects of language variables. The area of language analysis seems to hold the greatest potential for investigating these issues in the small group as well. Holdridge, Larsen, and Lashbrook (1971) discovered that small groups develop a language of their own and that group members

respond most efficiently to messages which are encoded in the group language. Dunphy (1966) also reported that through content analysis of group language patterns we can examine phase movements and role differentiation in on-going groups. By examining the language behavior of a small group we should be able to determine the general climate of interaction which exists in the group and if that interaction climate is task-oriented we may expect the task-leader to be the most influential, whereas, if the interaction is emotionally oriented we may expect the socio-emotional leader to exert the greatest amount of influence.

Theoretic Propositions and Hypotheses

There exists a need for integrated research in small groups as well as the application of constructs from other contexts. We also should commit ourselves to doing communication research which takes on a process orientation. The research reviewed in this paper supports an interdependent relationship of the variables examined and they would appear to lend themselves to a process view of communication which can be integrated with not only other small group findings, but general research of communication behavior in many contexts as well. The following propositions and hypotheses are based on these condierations.

In developing the following propositions and hypotheses we will assume that group measures will be taken at phase 1, the middle of the groups life span; at phase 2, the conclusion of the groups formal life span; and at phase 3, three weeks following the groups last face-to-face encounter.

Proposition 1. Over time group members attribute human characteristics to the group.

1a. The loss of individual identity contributes to a sense of group identity and a shift from an impersonal concern with authority structure and power maneuvers to a greater emotional involvement by the group membership.

Definition: The group personality or identity construct comes into existence when the group exerts power or influence over individuals in the group.

H_1 Over time the interaction in a small group will become more socio-emotionally oriented.

Phase 1

Proposition 1-1 During the early stages of the group development there will be an emphasis on task and procedural functions.

Proposition 1-2 The group will look to the emergent task leader as having the best estimate of the task at hand and having control of task-rewards.

$1\text{-}2_a$ The group will look to the task leader as being that individual who most brings structure to the process of accomplishing the task.

$1\text{-}2_b$ The group will perceive the task leader as that individual who has the most accurate perception of their skills as they relate to the task.

Definition: The emergent task-leader is the individual group member which displays the most task-oriented behavior as defined by Bales IPA categories.

Proposition 1-3 The control of task-environmental rewards is a source of power for the task leader.

Proposition 1-4 High status group members are perceived as attractive to the other group members.

Definition: Interpersonal attraction is defined as the desire of one individual to maintain and establish an extended relationship with another individual.

Proposition 1-5 The greater the interpersonal attraction of other group members to a single individual, the greater the power of the individual.

H_2 The task-leader will be perceived as more credible by the other group members than will the socio-emotional leader.

H_3 The task-leader will be perceived as more attractive by the other group members than will the socio-emotional leader.

H_4 The task leader will have more influence over the group with a written persuasive message than will the socio-emotional leader.

Phase 2

Proposition 2-1 When task obstacles arise, the group will tend to look toward the task leader as the individual best qualified to perform some type of servo-function which will remove obstacles.

$2\text{-}1_a$ The success of the task-leader in removing task obstacles will be a source of power.

Proposition 2-2 When interpersonal obstacles arise, the group will tend to look toward the emergent socio-emotional leader as the individual best qualified to perform some type of servo-function which will remove the obstacles.

$2\text{-}2_a$ The success of the socio-emotional leader in removing interpersonal obstacles will be a source of power.

Proposition 2-3 Because of the way the group members have become to relate to the group (See Proposition 1, 1a) the socio-emotional leader will be perceived as highly attractive to the group.

Proposition 2-4 The greater the personal attraction of other group members to a single individual, the greater the power of that individual.

H_5 The task leader will be perceived as more credible than the socio-emotional leader.

H_6 The socio-emotional leader will be perceived as more attractive than the task-leader.

H_7 The task-leader will have more influence over the group with a written persuasive message on a task-related topic than the socio-emotional leader.

H_8 The socio-emotional leader will have more influence with a written message on a non-task-related topic than the task-leader.

Phase 3

Proposition 3-1 The effects of credibility on attitude change decrease over time.

Proposition 3-2 The importance of task functions decrease after completion of the task.

Proposition 3-3 The success of the socio-emotional leader in solving problems of interpersonal relations will produce satisfaction.

Proposition 3-4 Interaction with persons who are attractive and well-liked will produce satisfaction and a desire for continued interaction.

Proposition 3-5 The greater the personal attraction of others to a single individual, the greater the power of that individual.

H_9 The task-leader's credibility will decrease from phase 2 to phase 3.

H_{10} The socio-emotional leader will be perceived as more attractive than the task-leader.

H_{11} The socio-emotional leader will have more influence with a written message regardless of the nature of the topic than will the task leader.

VARIABLES AND POSSIBLE OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Independent Variables

The task leader and socio-emotional leader can be defined as the individual group members which display the greatest amount of task-oriented behavior and socio-emotionally-oriented behavior as measures by Bales IPA.

Time constitutes an independent variable for hypotheses 1 and 9.

Dependent Variables

The dependent variable of group orientation for hypothesis 1 could be measured by content analysis of group members' weekly written reports with the General Inquirer (a computer program used to identify recurrent patterns with written and spoken language) and with Bales IPA.

Source credibility could be measured with McCroskey's (1971) peer credibility scales which have provided a four-factor solution in previous research.

Interpersonal attraction could be measured by a questionnaire adapted from the instruments developed by Kiesler and Goldberg (1968) and McCroskey and McCain (1972).

Influence could be determined by a pre-post test of attitudes toward a persuasive message attributed to either the task leader or the socio-emotional leader of the group. Typical attitude measures consisting of semantic differential type scales with bi-polar adjectives of an evaluative nature could be used.

Simulation of Theoretical Considerations

Proana5, a computerized technique for small group interaction analysis and simulation, is included in this paper to demonstrate the effects of process change on leader role types in terms of patterned and non-patterned interaction.

The early stages of group development may be characterized by a relatively slow interaction tempo with a considerable amount of non-patterned interaction. There is usually an emphasis on task and procedural functions as the group attempts to select a leader and define its reason for existence. The individual member with the best estimate of the group's task and the members' abilities will most likely emerge as the group leader and exert his power and influence over the group. This member will further perform functions which are interpreted as task functions and he will generally be perceived as both credible and attractive to the group membership.

As the group begins to develop a personality construct of its own the functions performed by all members become more important. There is also an increased likelihood of interpersonal obstacles as the group identity becomes more clear. An increase in interaction activity and especially non-patterned interaction characterizes the presence of these interpersonal obstacles. The socio-emotional specialist then appears as a more influential group member because of the functions he contributes toward resolution of obstacles.

Over time the group as a whole will continue to take on more human qualities and the role of the socio-emotional leader becomes more significant. The attraction of the socio-emotional leader increases as his power over the group increases to the extent that his power may rival the task leaders, but only in non-task related areas. The group's interaction will become more even among the members and more patterned.

The task-leader is still perceived as a credible leader but because of the group's growth and increasingly emotional orientation his influence may diminish after the task is completed and continue to decrease over time. He will however still receive and initiate a large amount of communication and continue providing the group with task functions.

The Proana5 simulation provides a possible description of the interaction of on-going groups and depicts the theoretical considerations set forth in this paper.

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INTERACTION PROCESS ANALYSIS

PARTICIPANT	PERIOD 1	2	3	TOTAL
A	32.	33.	18.	83.
B	12.	18.	25.	55.
C	15.	20.	25.	60.
D	13.	22.	36.	71.
E	16.	7.	24.	47.
TOTAL	88.	100.	128.	316.

NON PATTERNED PROCESS ANALYSIS

PARTICIPANT	PERIOD 1	2	3	TOTAL
A	4.	7.	5.	16.
B	1.	5.	1.	7.
C	1.	6.	0.	7.
D	2.	4.	1.	7.
E	3.	0.	2.	5.
TOTAL	11.	22.	9.	42.

ANALYSIS INDICATES THAT THE DISCUSSION TENDED TO BE RUSHED DURING THE FINAL PERIOD

ANALYSIS INDICATES THAT ALL LINES OF COMMUNICATION WERE USED AT LEAST ONCE DURING THE 1 PERIOD OF THE DISCUSSION

ANALYSIS INDICATES THAT ALL LINES OF COMMUNICATION WERE USED AT LEAST ONCE DURING THE 2 PERIOD OF THE DISCUSSION

ANALYSIS INDICATES THAT ALL LINES OF COMMUNICATION WERE USED AT LEAST ONCE DURING THE 3 PERIOD OF THE DISCUSSION

PERIOD 1	PERCEIVED LEADERS FOR	A	B	C	D	E
			A	A	A	A
PERIOD 2	PERCEIVED LEADERS FOR	A	B	C	D	E
		D	A	A	A	D
PERIOD 3	PERCEIVED LEADERS FOR	A	B	C	D	E
		D	D	D		D

PERIOD 1 SHOWS NO CLIQUE GROUP DEVELOPMENT

PERIOD 2 SHOWS NO CLIQUE GROUP DEVELOPMENT

PERIOD 3 SHOWS NO CLIQUE GROUP DEVELOPMENT

ON THE BASIS OF THE ANALYSIS OF THE TOTAL INTERACTION NO EVIDENCE WAS FOUND TO INDICATE A SIGNIFICANT DEGREE OF SUBGROUPING ON THE PART OF THE MEMBERSHIP.

ANALYSIS INDICATES THAT INDIVIDUAL A DOMINATED THE GROUP DURING PERIOD 1
A POSSIBLE EXPLANATION OF THE DOMINANCE OF INDIVIDUAL A WAS THE FACT THAT HE (OR SHE) WAS THE PERCEIVED LEADER OF THE GROUP

ANALYSIS INDICATES THAT INDIVIDUAL A WAS THE PROCEDURAL LEADER OF THE GROUP.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS.

ANALYSIS INDICATES THAT INDIVIDUAL D WAS THE SOCIO-EMOT LEADER OF THE GROUP.

ANALYSIS INDICATES THE EMERGENCE OF TWO GROUP LEADERS.

THIS SIMULATION DEMONSTRATES THE INTERACTION BEHAVIOR OF A GROUP BASED ON THE THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS DEVELOPED IN THIS PAPER DURING PHASE 1 OF THE GROUP'S FACE-TO-FACE ENCOUNTER.

GIVEN A GROUP WHERE INFORMATION ABOUT THE TASK IS UNEVENLY DISTRIBUTED AMONG THE MEMBERSHIP YOU WOULD EXPECT AN UNUSUAL AMOUNT OF NON-PATTERNED INTERACTION IN THE EARLY STAGES OF THE DISCUSSION. EACH MEMBER OF THE GROUP MIGHT WELL HAVE AT LEAST ONE BIT OF NON-PATTERNED COMMUNICATION TO CONTRIBUTE AS HE ATTEMPTED TO GAIN STATUS WITH THE GROUP.

THE EARLY STAGES OF THE GROUP ARE CHARACTERIZED BY A HIGH CONCERN WITH TASK AND PROCEDURAL FUNCTIONS. THE TASK LEADER (A) HAS THE GREATEST POWER AT THIS STAGE AND IS LOOKED TO BY THE GROUP TO PERFORM AS THE GROUP LEADER.

THE SIMULATION INDICATES THAT THE DISCUSSION TENDED TO BE RUSHED DURING THE FINAL PERIOD. THE INCREASE IN PATTERNED INTERACTION DURING THIS PHASE ILLUSTRATES THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE GROUP'S PERSONALITY.

THE SOCIO-EMOTIONAL LEADER (D) IS ALSO RECOGNIZED AS HAVING HIGH PRESTIGE STATUS BY THE GROUP AND EMERGES TO PROVIDE SOME TYPE OF INTERPERSONAL SERVC-FUNCTION IN THE GROUP. HE BECOMES PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT WHEN THE GROUP IS FACED WITH AN INTERPERSONAL OBSTACLE AS IS CHARACTERIZED BY THE INTERACTION PATTERN IN PERIOD THREE.